Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. - 4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A system of manufacturing an air bag cover assembly including a plastic front panel, a plastic back plate, a switch and infrared-absorbing material, the system comprising:

at least one housing having a respective infrared lamp for emitting infrared radiation and an infrared shield for shielding the plastic front panel from the infrared radiation;

a base including a fixture mounted thereon for receiving and retaining the front panel and the back plate so that inner surfaces of the front panel and the back plate define a switch pocket therebetween;

an apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material; and

a controller coupled to the at least one infrared lamp for controlling power supplied to the at least one infrared lamp so that the at least one infrared lamp emits infrared radiation at the infrared-absorbing material when the infrared-absorbing material is disposed between the at least one infrared lamp and infrared shield for a time sufficient to heat the infrared-absorbing material to a desired temperature, wherein the heated infrared-absorbing material bonds the plastic front panel and back plate together when cooled without introducing deformities into outer class A surfaces of the plastic front panel.

6. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material is mounted for movement relative to the base for forcing the heated infrared-absorbing material to flow.

7. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the back plate includes a plurality of spaced holes extending therethrough and wherein the infrared-absorbing material forms a plurality of stakes that are staked by the apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material, connected to the inner surface of the front panel and extending

through the plurality of spaced holes and wherein the heated infrared-absorbing material forms a plurality of solid connectors when cooled.

8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material comprises at least one piston.

10. (currently amended) A system of manufacturing an air bag cover assembly including a plastic front panel, a plastic back plate, a switch and infrared-absorbing material, the system comprising:

at least one housing having a respective infrared lamp for emitting infrared radiation and an infrared shield for shielding the plastic front panel from the infrared radiation;

a base including a fixture mounted thereon for receiving and retaining the front panel and the back plate so that inner surfaces of the front panel and the back plate define a switch pocket therebetween;

an apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material; and

a controller coupled to the at least one infrared lamp for controlling power supplied to the at least one infrared lamp so that the at least one infrared lamp emits infrared radiation at the infrared-absorbing material when the infrared-absorbing material is disposed between the at least one infrared lamp and infrared shield for a time sufficient to heat the infrared-absorbing material to a desired temperature, and coupled to linear actuators that are connected to the apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material and controlled by the controller, wherein the heated infrared-absorbing material bonds the plastic front panel and back plate together when cooled without introducing deformities into outer class A surfaces of the plastic front panel.

11. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 10 wherein the apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material comprises at least one piston.

12. (currently amended) A system of manufacturing an air bag cover assembly including a plastic front panel, a plastic back plate, a switch and infrared-absorbing material, the system comprising:

at least one infrared lamp for emitting infrared radiation;

a base including a fixture mounted thereon for receiving and retaining the front panel and the back plate so that inner surfaces of the front panel and the back plate define a switch pocket therebetween;

~~an apparatus for staking the infrared-absorbing material;~~ and

a controller coupled to the infrared lamps for controlling power supplied to the infrared lamps so that the at least one infrared lamp emits infrared radiation at the infrared-absorbing material for a time sufficient to heat the infrared-absorbing material to a desired temperature, wherein each of the at least one infrared lamps is mounted near the apparatus for ~~staking~~ heating the infrared-absorbing material such that infrared radiation from the infrared lamps propagates through the back plate and the heated infrared-absorbing material is a heat-activated adhesive that bonds the plastic front panel and back plate together when cooled without introducing deformities into outer class A surfaces of the plastic front panel.

13. (canceled)

14. (new) The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the cooling is performed using a blower coupled to and controlled by the controller.

15. (new) The system as claimed in claim 10 wherein the cooling is performed using a blower coupled to and controlled by the controller.

16. (new) The system as claimed in claim 12 wherein the cooling is performed using a blower coupled to and controlled by the controller.